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I LOVE TO READ

PLUS PULL-OUT
WORKBOOK

BATMAN™

INSIDE
MEET:



KILLER
CROC



THE ATOM
& MORE



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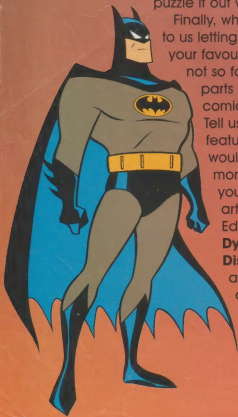
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to another great edition of **I Love to Read Batman**. This month's issue takes you underneath Gotham City! There, an adventure about Killer Croc, the very powerful reptile-man and king of the sewers, is waiting for you.

Fear itself seems to be stalking the streets of Gotham in "Fear City". The citizens are terrified, but what of? In this account, Commissioner Gordon tells his own version of this scary story and reveals which villain is behind it all.

The thrilling comic story, "The Big Sting," introduces another DC Comics super hero, **The Atom** to the pages of **I Love to Read Batman**. Read his Hero File and adventure, then turn to the Batman workbook and puzzle it out with him!

Finally, why not write to us letting us know your favourite and not so favourite parts of this comic magazine. Tell us which features you would like to see more of! Send your letters and artwork to the Editor c/o **Dynamic Dispatches** at the address on page 22!



REDAN

I LOVE TO READ

BATMAN™

3 BEHIND BARS

Killer Croc is threatening Gotham City's bank vaults. Batman is on the case - but can he trap him?

7 FIND THE BAT EMBLEMS

A search and find activity combined with a colouring page. So, get out your coloured pens and start colouring!

8 FEAR CITY

Commissioner Gordon is scared... But then again so is everyone in Gotham City. Except perhaps... Batman?

12 POSTER

Pull out this great picture poster of the Atom and put it on your bedroom wall.

13 BATMAN WORKBOOK

An eight page pull-out workbook full of puzzles and games for you to play.

22 DYNAMIC DISPATCHES

A fun page filled with some great letters sent in by readers like you.

23 HERO FILE

Find out all about the Atom and his enemies and how he is able to shrink to atomic size.

25 THE BIG STING

The Atom is literally stripped of his powers and trapped at six inches high by his enemy, the Sting. How will he survive and get back to his normal size?



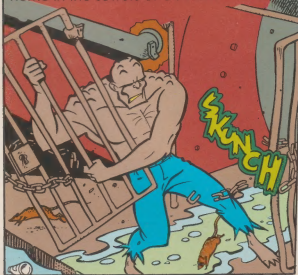
IN BEHIND BARS

Far below the streets of **Gotham City**, something nasty was moving!

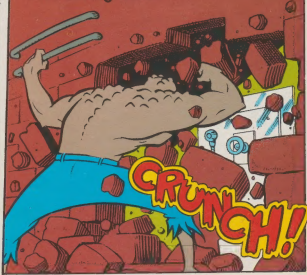
GRRL!



His name was **Killer Croc**, a former professional wrestler turned to crime. He was a "reptile man" with razor-sharp teeth and claws. He was most at home in the sewers of Gotham.



With his huge strength and keen knowledge of the sewer pipes and drains, it was easy for him to break into the City's bank vaults... from **underground!**





The Police were stumped
so they called for a
specialist...

...who swiftly arrived! "It's Killer
Croc!" Commissioner Gordon
told the Dark Knight...

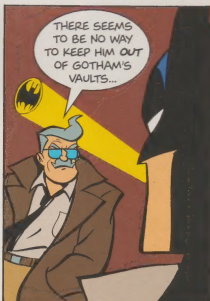
...HE'S RAIDED
THREE BANK
VAULTS ALREADY.
WE HAVE TO
STOP HIM!



THE SEWERS
ARE HIS KINGDOM.
HE KNOWS THEM
BETTER THAN
ANYONE.



THERE SEEMS
TO BE NO WAY
TO KEEP HIM OUT
OF GOTHAM'S
VAULTS...



"Perhaps..." said
Batman, "that's the
answer..."



Down in the sewers, Killer Croc was feeling very pleased with himself.



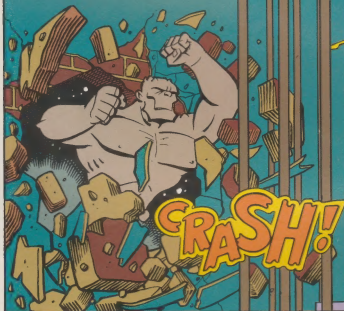
But he knew he would be happier still if he added the gold sculptures in City Hall to his spoils.



It was such **luck** for the newspaper to drift down into his storm-drain and tip him off. He set to work...



Soon, he had broken into the vault of City Hall. The gold sculptures were on display in a security cage...



...but that didn't stop him...

WRENCH!



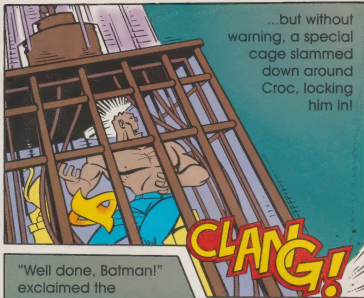
The gold was his...



try as he might, he could not bend the bars of the specially strengthened cage.



...but without warning, a special cage slammed down around Croc, locking him in!



"Well done, Batman!" exclaimed the commissioner as they stepped out of the shadows. "Your plan worked perfectly... the lure of gold, the unbreakable cage."

SINCE WE COULDN'T KEEP HIM OUT, COMMISSIONER, THE NEXT BEST THING...



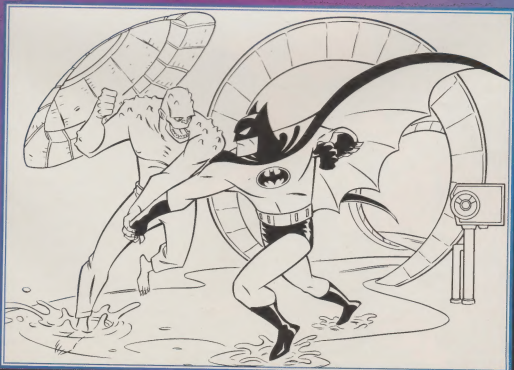
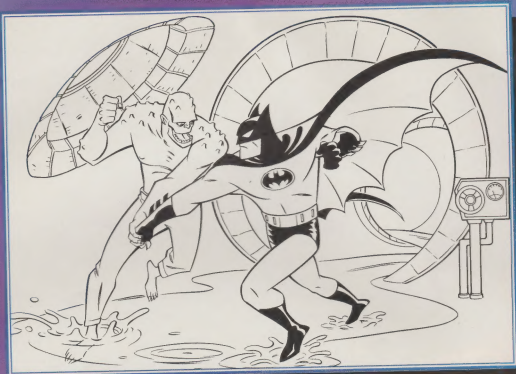
...WAS TO INVITE HIM IN AND MAKE SURE HE COULDN'T LEAVE!



THE END

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Can you spot **10** things missing in the bottom picture which are in the top one?



Answer: 1. Line on 'window'. 2. Croc's thumb. 3. 'Wings' on Batman's glove. 4. Cuff of Croc's trousers. 5. Ripple marks in water. 6. Bottom of Batman's cape. 7. Tunnel at back. 8. Pressure gauge. 9. Spoke from wheel. 10. Pipe.



FEAR CITY

A PERSONAL ACCOUNT BY
POLICE COMMISSIONER
GORDON.

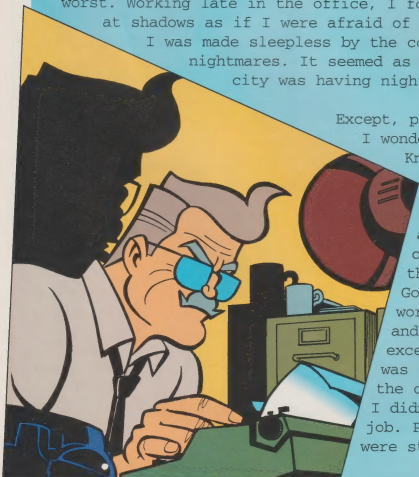
It was high summer, the hottest time of the year, and nerves were fraying in Gotham City. Everyone, from the officials at the Mayor's office to the tramps in the alleyways, seemed on edge, tense and uneasy. And it was getting worse by the day.

I got a report from the City Infirmary. It seemed that people who suffered from mild phobias under normal circumstances were suddenly having to be hospitalised as their phobias got worse and worse. It seemed like fear itself was stalking the streets of Gotham.

Even I was on edge. I couldn't explain it. Perhaps it was the hot weather - the sweltering days and long, stifling nights of high summer. The nights were the worst. Working late in the office, I found myself jumping at shadows as if I were afraid of the dark. At home, I was made sleepless by the constant, terrible nightmares. It seemed as if everyone in the city was having nightmares.

Except, perhaps - Batman.

I wondered if the Dark Knight ever had nightmares, or if he was ever afraid of anything. He was out every night as the situation in Gotham City grew worse, trying to tame and control the excessive crime that was erupting due to the city-wide terror. I didn't envy him the job. Police resources were stretched to the



limit as it was. Even I volunteered for some routine patrols. We needed every man we could get.

I met with Batman one night to see what he made of the situation. He arrived within minutes of my activating the Bat-Signal on the roof of Police Headquarters. We stood and talked in the hot night air.

Batman told me he believed that there must be something more to this wave of fear than simply fraying nerves and hot weather. He said he had a few lines of investigation to follow and that he would get back to me. As usual, before I had time to quiz him further, he was gone.

Later that night, someone phoned the Incident Room at Police Headquarters to report that an intruder had been spotted at the Gotham Municipal Waterworks. All my police units were tied up dealing with a bullion heist, so I leapt in my car and set off to investigate for myself. I thought perhaps a little active police work would calm my nerves and take my mind off things.

But by the time I pulled up outside the dark, imposing building that was the Gotham Municipal Waterworks, I felt afraid. It was dark. I was alone. Trying to shake off the feeling, I went inside.



Within the plant, everything spooked me. Shadows seemed to move and darkness surrounded me. I couldn't believe how fast my pulse was racing. I told myself it was all in my imagination.

But it wasn't. As I looked around, something struck me from behind!

When I woke up, I found myself tied up on top of one of the vast water tanks. I wriggled round and saw the Scarecrow, one of Batman's most dangerous foes. He was busy adding a chemical concoction to the city's water supply. When he saw me watching, he turned and gleefully told me he had been doing this every night for the last week. The potion was a 'fear stimulant', a powerful chemical he had invented that heightened an individual's phobias and dreads. Scarecrow was going to bring Gotham City to its knees through fear.



Now that I knew his plan, I was a danger to him. It seemed clear the villain intended to do away with me, probably by dropping me into the water tank. Although I knew my feelings of fear were caused by the Scarecrow's potion, I could not help but be afraid.

I thought it was all over, but suddenly Batman appeared. With a lightning punch, he defeated the Scarecrow. As Batman untied my bonds, he explained that he had added an antitoxin to the water supply to neutralise Scarecrow's potion. Gradually, everything would return to normal.

I asked him how he tracked the Scarecrow down. He answered that he knew it had to have been a form of poisoning, and that the one thing everyone in the city used was water - particularly in such hot weather.

The city was safe. It impresses me that during the emergency, of all the people in Gotham, only Batman seemed unafraid. His clarity and determination saved us all. I wonder, does Batman have no fear, or does he just not show it?



END



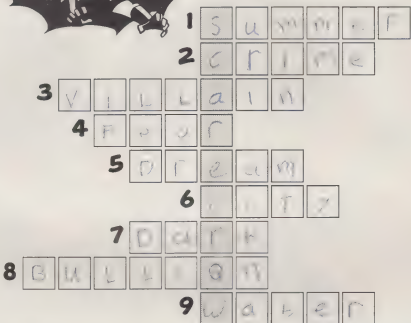
THE ATOM

BATMAN™ WORKBOOK

© DC Comics 1995

WHO'S HIDDEN?

Look at the clues and write the answers in the grid below. If you answer them correctly, the name of one of Batman's enemies will reveal itself in the grey squares.

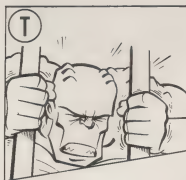
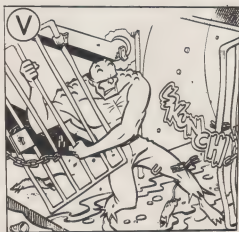
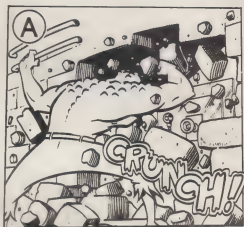


1. A sunny season.
2. To steal is a crime.
3. The bad person in a film or play is this.
4. The feeling of being frightened.
5. A nightmare is a bad one of these.
6. Gotham is one.
7. Batman is the Dark Knight.
8. Bars of gold or silver are called this.
9. The sea is made of salty water.



ALL MIXED UP

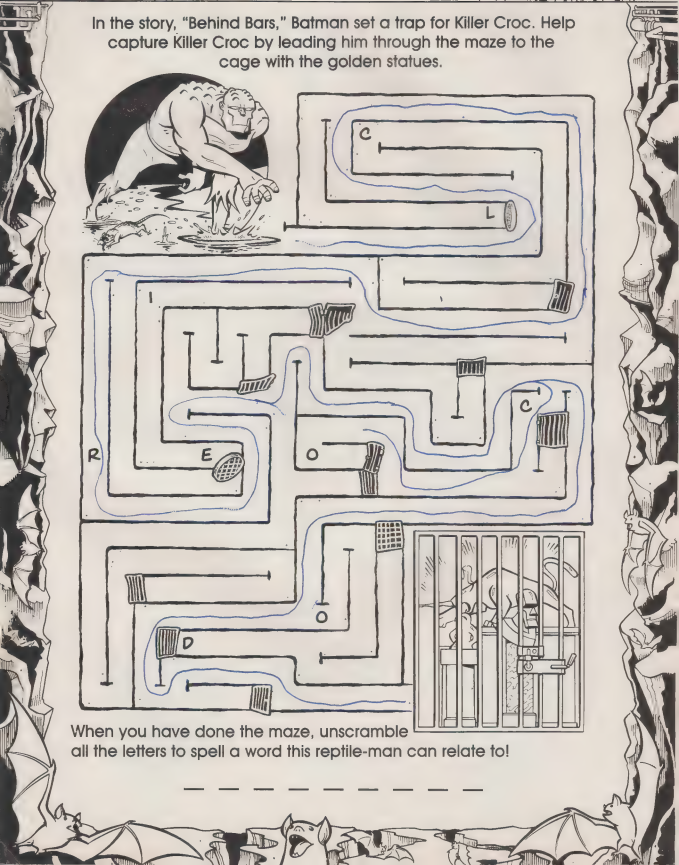
These pictures have been taken from the story, "Behind Bars". Put them in the **correct order (1-6)** and write the letter from each picture in the boxes below to find a word used in the story.



1	2	3	4	5	6

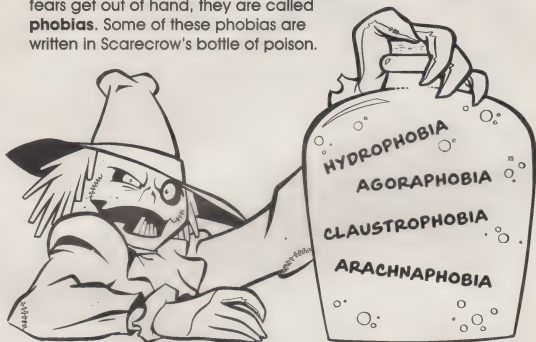
In the story, "Behind Bars," Batman set a trap for Killer Croc. Help capture Killer Croc by leading him through the maze to the cage with the golden statues.

When you have done the maze, unscramble all the letters to spell a word this reptile-man can relate to!



PHOBIAS

When the Scarecrow poisoned Gotham City's water supply, the citizens developed a fear of all sorts of different things. When fears get out of hand, they are called **phobias**. Some of these phobias are written in Scarecrow's bottle of poison.



Read the information below and see if you can work out what each phobia is a fear of then write them on the dotted lines.

Arachnids is the scientific name for spiders and scorpions. So, what is a fear of spiders?

The word **hydro** means something to do with water. If you feared water, what phobia would you have?

Clostrum was the Latin word for a closed place. From it we get a word meaning a fear of enclosed places. What phobia is it?

A market place was called an **agora** in ancient Greece. So what is someone who is afraid of open or public places suffering from?

IN THE SHADOWS

Some of the villains from the Batman stories are hidden in the shadows. Unscramble the words in the balloons to reveal their names, then join the balloons to the silhouette each matches.



TE
ADHR
AMT



RLC
LEK
ROC

WT
AFC
OE



FLY
AAC
CE

RK
OEJ

NU
ENI
GP



DLE
IDR
R

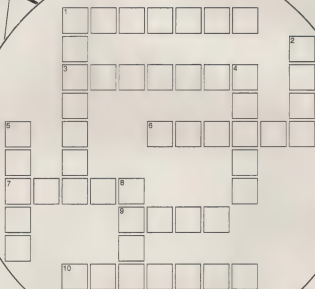


NMW
AAC
OT

ATOM CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. Get in touch with.
3. Group of animals that are similar.
6. Become smaller.
7. Pictures in the mind of a sleeper.
9. Smallest particle of an element.
10. Tiny six-legged creatures.



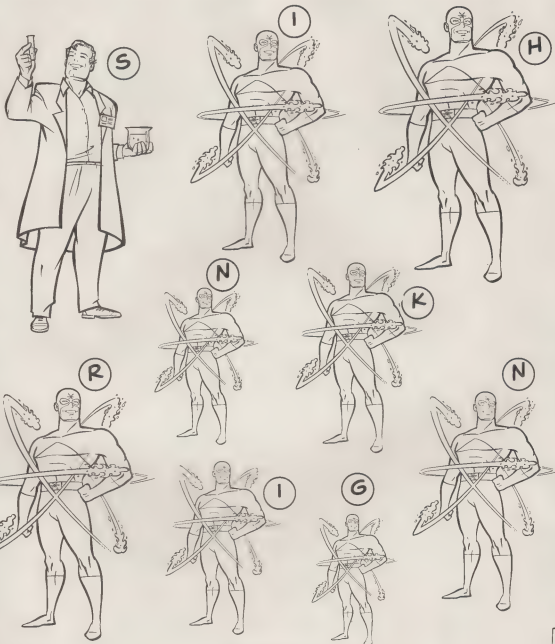
CLUES DOWN

1. Fancy clothing.
2. It hides the face.
4. Bees and wasps do this - ouch!
5. Woman whose husband has died.
8. Large number of things grouped together.



ATOMIC PUZZLE

When Ray Palmer puts on his special headgear, he turns into **The Atom** and becomes smaller and smaller. Starting with Ray, put the figures of the Atom in order as he gets smaller. Then write the letters next to them in the same order to describe what he is doing.

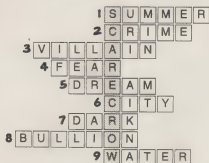


The Atom is...

s h i n k i n g

ANSWERS

WHO'S HIDDEN?



MIXED UP STORY

The word is VAULTS.

PHOBIAS

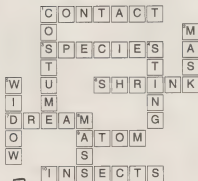
Fear of spiders:
ARACHNAPHOBIA

Fear of water:
HYDROPHOBIA

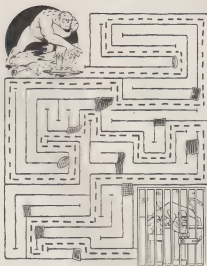
Fear of enclosed places:
CLAUSTROPHOBIA

Fear of open places:
AGORAPHOBIA

ATOM CROSSWORD



MAZE



The letters spell
CROCODILE.

IN THE SHADOWS

1. PENGUIN
2. RIDDLER
3. CATWOMAN
4. JOKER
5. CLAYFACE
6. KILLER CROC

Two villains' names
were also included to
catch you out: TWO
FACE AND MAD HATTER!

ATOMIC PUZZLE

The Atom is SHRINKING.



DYNAMIC DISPATCHES

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR READERS WHO HAVE SENT US LETTERS. SOME OF THEM ARE SHOWN HERE. IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR LETTER, JOKE OR PICTURE OF ANY DC SUPER HERO PRINTED IN THIS COMIC, SEND IT TO THE EDITOR C/O:
DYNAMIC DISPATCHES,
I LOVE TO READ BATMAN
139 KING STREET
LONDON W6 9JG

Dear I Love to Read Batman,
I think Batman is great and so is your comic! I really like the puzzles. My friend, Bob, had a party last week and I went, dressed up as Batman.

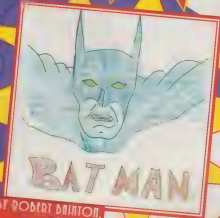
James Taylor
Manchester

James, it's good to hear such positive remarks about our new Batman magazine and I hope you continue to enjoy it.

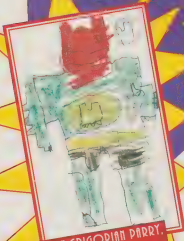
Editor



BY GREGORY KEITH,
WESTON SUPER MARE



BY ROBERT BRINTON,
MILL



BY ALBERT GRIGORIAN PARRY,
LUDLOW SALOP

Dear I Love to Read Batman,
I have just bought a copy of the Batman comic and was impressed. This has to be the greatest magazine I've bought... ever! I have to admit that out of all DC Comics characters, Wonder Woman is my favourite.

Keep up the excellent work.

Tony Field
London

Thanks for your letter, Tony. Since you like Wonder Woman so much, I hope you enjoyed the last issue of I Love to Read Batman in which the Amazon Princess featured.

Editor



BY ZAHEN AKBAR,
WEMBLEY



THE HERO FILE

Alter Ego: Ray Palmer

Occupation:
Crimefighter, physics
professor

Known Relatives:
David Palmer and Susan
Taylor Palmer (parents,
deceased), Jean Loring
Palmer (ex-wife)

Group Affiliation:
Justice League America,
Suicide Squad

Base of Operations:
Ivy Town

First Appearance:
SHOWCASE #34
(September-October,
1951)

Height (full size):
6 feet to subatomic

Weight (full size):
180 pounds

Eyes: Brown

Hair: Rubrum

THE ATOM

While still a graduate student in physics at Ivy University, **Ray Palmer** devoted himself to the study and development of a method for miniaturizing objects. His experiments were going nowhere until he stumbled across a piece of a white dwarf star that had fallen to Earth. (White dwarf stars are stars that were originally larger than our own sun, but have collapsed to about the size of the Earth. Because of this, they are very dense in structure, although they have the same weight as they did at their original size.)

Palmer shaped the fallen piece of the star into a lens and found that by placing it in his reducing machine and shining ultraviolet light through it, he could shrink objects to any size; however, the objects became unstable and exploded.

Palmer carried the lens everywhere, hoping to find the answer. The solution came while he was on a field trip with his girlfriend, **Jean Loring**, and a group of students. Trapped by a cave-in, Palmer risked his life to save the group. He placed the lens in a shaft of daylight under a dripping stalactite and stood beneath it. Combined with the cave water and Palmer's body chemistry, the beam of light made him small enough to escape the cave, return to normal size, and get help to free the students. For some unknown reason, his body chemistry kept him from exploding as everything else had.

Palmer soon perfected the beam's effects on his body and reduced the controls for the shrinking machine into his new headgear. Calling himself the **Atom**, and using his unique shrinking abilities, he set out to help humankind any way he could.

The Atom can shrink to any size, even smaller than atomic, and can use all of his mass up to his original weight of 180 pounds. The concentration of this mass allows him to pack a powerful punch even when he is subatomic. He can ride the back of a bird as if it were a horse, and can make himself small enough and light enough to ride the electrical impulses on a phone line, enabling him to travel incredible distances in the time it takes to make a telephone call.

The modern-day version of the Atom, introduced by writer **Gardner Fox** and illustrator **Gil Kane** in 1961, is a current member of **Justice League America**



and has fought alongside the **Suicide Squad** as well. He has fought many villains over the years, including:

Chronos: While in prison, inventor **David Clinton** realized he could avoid being arrested if he could manipulate the flow of time. Using scientific

devices of his own invention, **Chronos** can literally disappear at will by moving a few minutes into the past or future.



The Sting: Corrupt CIA agent **Ronald Sweet** improved on the technology developed by one-time Atom villain the **Bug-Eyed Bandit**. Using the Bandit's army of robotic insects, the Sting has become a deadly enemy of the Atom.

Humbug: Created by **GESTALT**, a group of renegade scientists, **Humbug** is an artificial intelligence designed to inhabit and control a variety of robot bodies. Flawed and rebellious, **Humbug** turned to crime and has proven to be one of the Atom's toughest foes.



The Floronic Man: **Jason Woodrue** came to Earth from an alien dimension and became a botanist at Ivy University, where his plant experiments brought him into conflict with the Atom. Since then, he has learned his ultimate destiny: one of a handful of **New Guardians**, super-heroes preparing humanity for its next evolutionary step.



—Robert Simpson

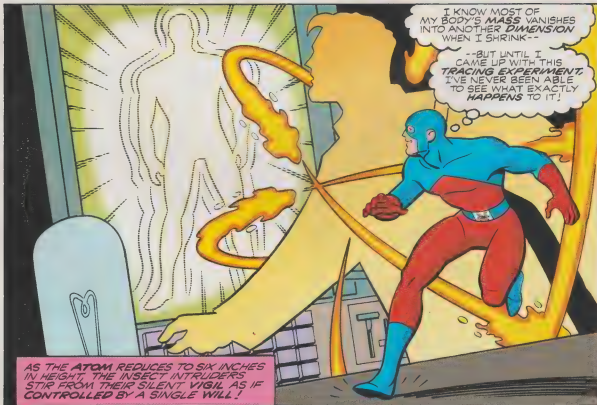
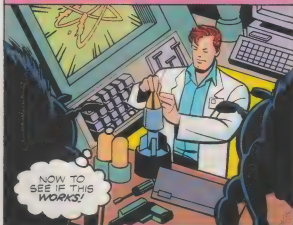
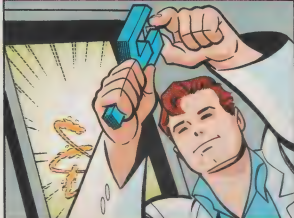
BY EXPERIMENTING WITH A FRAGMENT OF A WHITE DWARF STAR THAT HAD FALLEN TO EARTH, SCIENTIST RAY PALMER UNLOCKED THE SECRET OF HUMAN MINIALIZATION. NOW, HE USES THAT POWER TO EXPLORE THE UNKNOWN AND PROTECT THE INNOCENT AS...

THE ATOM™

THE BIG STING!

MIDNIGHT AT IVYTOWN UNIVERSITY, WHERE RAY PALMER WORKS FEVERISHLY IN HIS LAB...

...UNWARE OF THE COLD, UNFEELING EYES THAT FOLLOW HIS EVERY MOVE!



AS THE ATOM REDUCES TO SIX INCHES IN HEIGHT, THE INSECT INTRUDERS STIR FROM THEIR SILENT VIGIL AS IF CONTROLLED BY A SINGLE WILL!

TENNESSEE
PEYER
WRITER

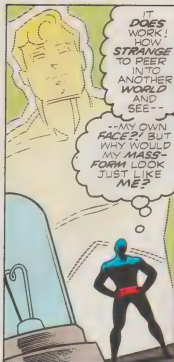
MIKE
PAROBECK
PENCILLER

RICK
BURCHETT
INKER

STUART
CHAIFETZ
COLORIST

KEVIN
CUNNINGHAM
LETTERER

CHARLES
KOCHMAN
EDITOR



IT DOES
WORK!
HOW
STRANGE
TO PEEK
INTO
ANOTHER
WORLD
AND SEE--

--MY OWN
FACE? BUT
WHY WOULD
MY MASS--
FORM LOOK
JUST LIKE
ME?



IT COULD
MEAN THE
MASS IS
SPECIALLY
ATTUNED
TO MY--

WONK

→ LINNHH! →

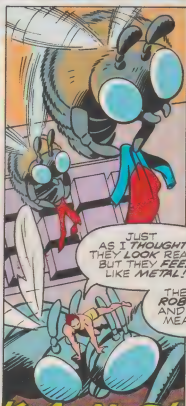


INSECTS!
ALL DIFFERENT
SPECIES-- SWARMING
TOGETHER--?

MY MASK!
I CAN'T
CHANGE SIZE
WITHOUT
IT!



IT'S LIKE SOME
WEIRD DREAM! INSECTS
DON'T GANG UP TO
LINDRESS PEOPLE...



JUST
AS I THOUGHT!
THEY LOOK REAL...
BUT THEY FEEL
LIKE METAL!

THEY'RE
ROBOTS--
AND THAT
MEANS--

KLANNNGG!



CORRECT,
PALMER! THAT
MEANS ME!

YOUR
OLD
FOE--

OFF



YOU KNOW, YOU NEVER SHOULD HAVE REVEALED YOUR SECRET IDENTITY TO THE WORLD!

IT'S BEST TO STAY HIDDEN WHEN YOU'VE MADE ENEMIES AS DANGEROUS AS ME!

RETURN TO THE HIVE, MY PETS! I NOW HAVE WHAT I CAME FOR!

"AND MAKE NO MISTAKE, PALMER! I AM YOUR ENEMY--"

"--EVER SINCE YOU SHRANK ME TO THIS RIDICULOUS SIZE AND LEFT ME TO FEND FOR MYSELF!"



IT WAS THE BEST WAY I KNEW TO PROTECT THE WORLD FROM YOU AND YOUR MURDEROUS CRONIES!

I HOPE YOU'RE NOT PLANNING ON USING MY COSTUME TO GROW--



OH, BUT I AM--AND YOU'RE NOT STOPPING ME!

GET HIM, WIDOW--



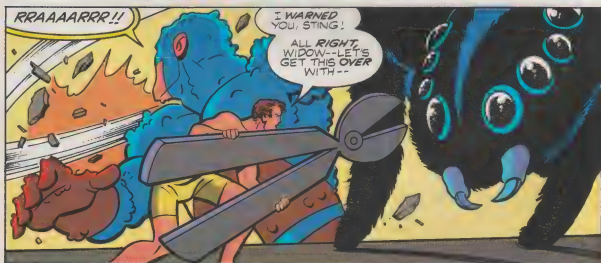
STING! DON'T!

YOU'RE MAKING A BIG MISTAKE--

OH, REALLY?



REGAINING MY FULL HEIGHT WHILE YOU STAY TRAPPED AT SIX INCHES DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A MISTAKE TO ME!







NEXT
TIME, PICK
ON SOMEONE
YOUR OWN
SIZE!



SOON...
DON'T BOTHER
CALLING YOUR ROBOTS.
I DISABLED YOUR
TRANSMITTER, AND THE
POLICE ARE ON THEIR
WAY.



IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF...



"Batman Rescues...Bruce Wayne?"
Gotham's benevolent billionaire is taken hostage by Batman's arch enemy, **the Penguin**. Robin must find a way of rescuing Bruce Wayne without revealing that the billionaire



is really Gotham's hero - Batman himself.

You'll have to wait for issue five to find out whether Robin succeeds or not!

Do you like bats? In our next issue we have a double page feature on these creatures of the night. Find out where they live, what they eat and if they are really almost blind!



Photo: Mike Pembroke, Ink: Rick Burdett

Of course no issue of **I Love to Read Batman** would be complete without introducing you to one of DC Comics' other Super Heroes. So, next time, find out all about **the Flash**.

PLUS A COMPETITION & BATMAN TATTOOS!

ENJOY EVERY ISSUE OF



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